

# Health Mate

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## *Guidelines for Personal Exercise Programs*

Now that the holidays are over many people begin an exercise program to fulfill a New Year's resolution. However, most people over do it and burnout, or they don't know how to begin an exercise program. The decision to carry out a physical fitness program cannot be taken lightly. It requires a lifelong commitment of time and effort if the program is to be effective. Exercise must become one of those things you do without question. Unless you are convinced of the benefits of fitness and the risks of unfitness, you will not succeed. Patience is essential. Don't try to do too much too soon and don't quit before you have a chance to experience the rewards of improved fitness. You can't regain in a few days or weeks what you have lost in years of sedentary living, but you can get it back if you persevere. And the prize is worth the price. The following is some basic information to begin and maintain a personal physical fitness program.

### **Checking your Health**

If you're under 35 and in good health, you don't need to see a doctor before beginning and exercise program. But if you are over 35 and have been inactive for several years, you should consult your physician, who may or may not recommend a graded exercise test. Other conditions that indicate a need for medical clearance are: High blood pressure, heart trouble, family history of early stroke or heart attack deaths, frequent dizzy spells, arthritis or other bone problems, severe muscular, ligament or tendon problems, or other known diseases.

### **Defining Fitness**

Physical fitness is to the human body what fine tuning is to an engine. It enables us to perform up to our potential. Fitness can be described as a condition that helps us look, feel, and do our best. More specifically, it is "the ability to perform daily tasks vigorously and alertly, with energy left

over for enjoying leisure-time activities and meeting emergency demands." As you undertake your fitness program, it is important to remember that fitness is an individual quality that varies from person to person. It is influenced by age, sex, heredity, personal habits, exercise and eating practices. You can't do anything about the first three factors. However, it is within your power to change improve the others where needed.

### **Knowing the Basics**

Physical fitness is most easily understood by examining its components or parts. There is widespread agreement that these four components are basic. Cardiorespiratory Endurance: the ability to deliver oxygen and nutrients to tissues, and to remove wastes, over sustained periods of time. You should strive for three 20 minute bouts of continuous aerobic exercise each week (plus 5 minute warm-up and 5 minute cool-down).

Popular aerobic conditioning activities include brisk walking, jogging, swimming, cycling, rope-jumping, rowing, cross-country skiing and some continuous action games like racquetball and handball. However, recent research shows that even splitting your work-out to three (3) 10 minute intervals of activity that increases your heart can be of some health benefit. This is particularly important for those populations who feel they can't do 20 minutes straight of activity. With this flexible workout regime, many sedentary, older adults or obese individuals have found their compliance or ability to stick with a program over time is enhanced.

Muscular Strength: the ability of a muscle to exert force for a brief period of time. Two 20 minute sessions per week are recommended. Lifting weights is the most effective way to increase strength.

Muscular Endurance: the ability of a muscle to sustain repeated contractions or to continue applying force against a fixed object. At least three 30 minutes sessions each week should be performed. These exercises include calisthenics, pushups, situps, pullups, and weight training for major muscle groups.

Flexibility: the ability to move joints and use muscles through their full range of motion. Ten to 12 minutes of daily

stretching performed slowly without a bouncing motion is recommended. This can be included after a warm-up or during a cool-down.

## **Workout Schedule**

How often, how long and how hard you exercise, and what kinds of exercises you do should be determined by what you are trying to accomplish. Your goals, your present fitness level, age health, skills, interest and convenience are among the factors you should consider. For example, an athlete training for high-level competition would follow a different program than a person whose goals are good health and the ability to meet work and recreational needs. Your exercise program should include something from each of the four basic fitness components described previously. Each workout should begin with a warm-up (10-15 minutes) and end with a cool-down (5-10 minutes). As a general rule, space your workouts throughout the week and avoid consecutive days of hard exercise.

## **Clothing**

All exercise clothing should be loose fitting to permit freedom of movement, and should make the wearer feel comfortable and self-assured. As a general rule, you should wear lighter clothes than temperatures might

indicate. Exercise generates great amounts of body heat. Light colored clothing reflects the sun's rays is cooler in the summer and makes you more visible to impending dangers (traffic, etc.). In cold weather and in hot, sunny weather, it is a good idea to wear something on your head. Wool watch or ski caps are recommended for winter wear, and some form of tennis or sailor's hat that provides shade for summer. Never wear rubberized or plastic clothing. Such garments interfere with the evaporation of perspiration and can cause body temperature to rise to dangerous levels. The most important item of equipment for the runner is a sturdy, properly fitting running shoes.

## **When to Exercise**

The hour just before the evening meal is a popular time for exercise. The late afternoon workout provides a welcome change of pace at the end of the work day and helps dissolve the day's worries and tensions. Another popular time to work out is early morning, before the work day begins. Advocates of the early start say it makes them more alert and energetic on the job. Among the factors you should consider in developing your workout schedule are personal preference, job and family responsibilities, availability of exercise facilities and weather. It's important to schedule your

workouts for a time when there is little chance that you will have to cancel or interrupt them because of other demands on your time. *From the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports*



## Home Remedies

### **Soothe a Sore Throat with Hot Tea.**

Three out of five doctors in a recent survey said tea is what they used to comfort their own sore throats. According to ear, nose, and throat specialist Toni M. Levine, MD, assistant professor of otolaryngology at Northwestern University, hot tea “relieves some of the inflammation and washes away nasal drainage that irritates the back of the throat. Plus, you get the added benefit of inhaling steam which helps loosen up congestion.” For flavor add some lemon juice and honey to the tea. Neither helps treat the throat, but the lemon juice provides a healthy dose of Vitamin C. Adding

some spice jump-starts the throat soothing process. Substituting  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon hot red pepper for the lemon juice can subdue one of the body's pain chemicals- substance P, a neuropeptide that carries pain signals to the brain- so the swallowing doesn't hurt as much.

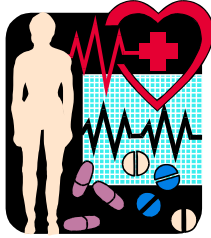
### **Unclog a Stuffy Nose with Pepper**

Don't rush out to the corner drugstore for a decongestant; your remedy for a stuffy nose could be right in your kitchen spice rack. “Both red and black pepper dilate blood vessels in the nose and stimulate secretions, which help drain sinuses,” says Mark Stengler, ND, a naturopathic physician in private practice in Carlsbad, CA, who frequently recommends red pepper (also called cayenne pepper) to his patients. Red pepper has the added benefit of containing the chemical capsaicin, which experts believe serves as a natural inflammatory. To clear up your stuffy nose, simply spice up your food by sprinkling red or black pepper to taste on your lunch and dinner. Both pepper and decongestants dilate your nasal passages but only the spices stimulate secretions. Plus, unlike pepper, over the counter

drugs for sinus congestion often contain an antihistamine that can make you drowsy. Depending on your tolerance for hot, spicy flavors, the therapeutic effects of these peppers will vary. Anything under a teaspoon may give you only mild improvement.

### **Heal Dry Skin with Vegetable Shortening!**

“Vegetable shortening is especially great for people with sensitive skin,” says Dee Anna Glaser, MD, assistant professor of dermatology at St. Louis University School of Medicine. “Since it is free of preservatives and fragrance, it won't irritate sensitive skin.” Dr Glaser suggests that after soaking in a nighttime lukewarm bath, pat yourself semidry and rub in a light layer of vegetable shortening (a common brand is Crisco) to lock in the moisture. Put on a pair of old pajamas and hop into bed. One caution: although it won't stain it could leave grease marks on satin sheets. But your skin should feel just like it is wearing a pricey moisturizer. If you have very dry skin, you may want to try this shortening routine daily until your skin gets back in shape. Then, cut back to twice a week or so.



## Helpful Tips about Heart Disease

- ✓ A major study from a group of researchers in Finland confirms that switching to soft margarine from butter, and from whole milk to reduced fat milk, can have a dramatic effect on heart disease risk. The study attributes the decreased intake of saturated fat and subsequent reduction in heart disease to these products introduction 20 years ago.
- ✓ Older people should not let low blood cholesterol levels fool them into thinking they may not be at risk for heart disease. A new study finds that a person's cholesterol levels during middle age are better predictors of heart disease risk than their cholesterol levels during older age. Because cholesterol levels may spontaneously decline with age, researchers now believe that a person should reduce his/her cholesterol levels much earlier in life and keep them down.
- ✓ Americans are only getting half as much fiber as they need. Because eating enough fiber rich foods should be a part of a diet to lower blood cholesterol and risk of heart disease, consumers are

urged to increase their intake to 25-30 grams of fiber a day. Eating a variety of whole grains, legumes, vegetables and fruits can add valuable fiber to the diet in addition to important vitamins and minerals.

- ✓ Lifestyle changes such as losing weight, exercising, and reducing intake of fat and cholesterol can slow or even slightly reverse the process of clogging arteries. Researchers determined that these are three of the easiest lifestyle changes one can make to reduce the risk of arteriosclerosis.
- ✓ Teenagers who eat fatty foods may increase their risk of heart disease in later life according to a new research that analyzed fatty deposits in the arteries of teenagers who had died of other causes.
- ✓ Researchers found that there was a significantly decreased incidence of coronary death among more than 34,000 postmenopausal women who ate diets comprised of foods rich in Vitamin E.

♠ *From the American Heart Association.*

This newsletter is intended solely for the Coast Guard Headquarters Staff in conjunction with the Coast Guard Headquarters Wellness Program. It is designed to inform Coast Guard personnel about the latest health information to assist them in developing a healthy lifestyle. Articles in this publication are taken from various health resources. Comments and contributions should be directed to the Editor—  
LTJG Kirk Kinder  
Comdt. (G-WPM)

# Low-Fat Entrees

## New England Fish Chowder

<i>1lb. Fresh cod or haddock</i>	<i>1 c. sliced leeks</i>
<i>4 c. skim milk</i>	<i>1 t. salt</i>
<i>2 c. peeled and diced potatoes</i>	<i>1 T. fresh lemon juice</i>
<i>1 c. frozen no-salt-added baby green peas</i>	<i>2 T. margarine</i>
<i>2 T. finely chopped fresh parsley</i>	<i>¼ t. ground white pepper</i>

Rinse fish and pat dry. Cut into 1-inch pieces and set aside. In a large saucepan over medium heat, combining milk, potatoes and salt. Cover and cook 25 to 30 minutes. In a small nonstick skillet, melt margarine. Add leeks and saute until limp. Set aside

Remove 1 cup potatoes and 1 cup liquid from saucepan, and place in a blender or the work bowl of a food processor fitted with a metal blade. Process until smooth. Return potatoes and liquid to pan over medium-high heat. Add sauteed leeks, fish, peas, parsley and pepper and lemon juice. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer 10 minutes or until fish is done.(227 calories/4.8 gm. fat.)

## Crispy Baked Chicken

<i>Vegetable oil spray</i>	<i>1 cup skim milk</i>
<i>1 2 ½ to 3 lb frying chicken, cut into serving pieces, skinned, with visible fat removed</i>	
<i>1 c. cornflake crumbs</i>	<i>1 t. rosemary</i>
<i>½ t. freshly ground black pepper</i>	

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Line a baking pan with foil and spray foil with vegetable oil. Rinse chicken and pat dry. Set aside.

Pour milk into shallow bowl. Combine cornflake crumbs, rosemary, and pepper in another shallow bowl. Dip chicken pieces first into milk and then into crumb mixture. Allow to stand briefly so coating will adhere.

Arrange chicken in prepared pan so pieces do not touch. Bake 45 minutes, or until done. Crumbs will for a crisp skin. Serves four (246calories/7 gm. fat).

## Eggplant Zucchini Casserole

<i>Vegetable oil spray</i>	<i>2 8oz cans no-salt tomato sauce</i>
<i>2 t Worcestershire sauce</i>	<i>Freshly ground pepper to taste</i>
<i>1 t. oregano</i>	<i>½ t. basil</i>
<i>2 medium garlic cloves, crushed</i>	<i>1 medium eggplant, peeled/sliced</i>
<i>2 medium zucchini, sliced</i>	<i>1 c. uncooked spaghetti, broken in pieces</i>
<i>3 medium stalks of celery, chopped</i>	<i>1 medium green bell pepper, chopped</i>

*8 oz. Part-skim mozzarella cheese cut into 18 small slices*

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Lightly spray a 9x13 inch casserole dish with vegetable oil. In a bowl combine tomato sauce, Worcestershire sauce, black pepper, herbs and garlic. Mix well and set aside.

In prepared casserole dish, arrange half of the eggplant slices in a single layer. Top with half of each of the following: zucchini slices, spaghetti, celery, onion and bell pepper. Next arrange 9 slices of cheese over this, and spoon half of tomato mixture on top of cheese. Repeat layers.

Cover and bake about 1 hour or until vegetables are tender.

Serves eight. (136calories/5 gm. fat) ♠*From American Heart Association.*



### **Snooze or Loose- Getting a Good Night's Sleep**

It takes you forever to fall asleep because you can't stop thinking of everything you have to do the next day. You wake up in the morning and, instead of feeling refreshed, you simply want to crawl back under the covers. You think the snooze button is one of mankind's greatest invention.

Does any of this sound familiar? Welcome to the club – the “sleep debt” club, whose members owe themselves more, or better sleep. You have a lot of company. It is estimated that between 40 and 60 million Americans are chronically deprived of sleep. Although the figure does include serious problems such as insomnia or sleep apnea, the vast majority are simply people who don't get enough quality shut-eye.

#### How much is enough?

There is no clear cut answer. We all know at least one of those irritating people who can get by with only 5-6 hours of sleep. And then there are those we know we can't call after 9p.m. because they've already started on the 10 hours they need every night. In general, most healthy adults need an average of seven to nine hours of quality sleep each night.

How do you know how much sleep you need? Putting the obvious aside (i.e. if you are tired, you are probably not getting enough) ask yourself if you are uncharacteristically irritable, fall asleep in boring situations, or rely on caffeine to get you through the day.

#### What about naps?

Our bodies have a natural tendency to slow down between one and four p.m., but it is highly doubtful that siestas are going to become part of North America's culture anytime soon.

However, if you can manage it, you will probably be refreshed by a short nap – 15 to 20 minutes maximum. Any longer and you can get hit with a double whammy – you'll wake up feeling groggy and you'll probably have a tough time falling asleep that night, resulting in a more serious sleep debt.

### How to Get a Good Night's Sleep

If your lights go off at 10 p.m. and the alarm goes off at six a.m., but it took you an hour to fall asleep and you woke up twice, you can hardly call that 8 hours of quality sleep. Quality counts as much as quantity. Try these tips for improving both:

**Go to bed at the same time every night and get up the same time every morning:** This is one area where the body craves consistency. Don't sleep in on the weekends to make up for lost sleep. If you do end up suffering from sleep debt during the week, go to bed earlier but get up the same time on the weekend.

**If you can't fall asleep after 30 minutes, then get up:** It should take an average of 15 to 20 minutes to fall asleep. If a half hour has gone by, don't just lie in bed tossing and turning. Get up and do something relaxing.

**Establish a regular bedtime routine:** Most children have a bedtime routine: bath, book and bed. As adults, we need to establish our own routines and rituals. It doesn't matter what you do, just be consistent and your routine will signal your brain that it is time to snooze.

**Use the bedroom for sleeping only:** In other words, leave the TV-watching, eating, and bill-paying activities to another part of your home so that your brain associates the bed and bedroom with sleep.

**Avoid caffeine, nicotine and alcohol in the late afternoon and evening:** All three inhibit the sleeping process.

**Don't exercise right before bedtime:** Exercising regularly can greatly improve the quality of your sleep, but do it at least three hours before bedtime. Some people may need to exercise up to six hours before bedtime in order to allow themselves enough time to unwind.

*From [Fitnesslink.com](http://Fitnesslink.com).*